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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 West 53rd Street
New York 19

The Museum Collections

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Nelson:

David Duncan is one of the most brilliant American documentary photographers -- Life, Look, etc. -- and has recently spent three months at Cannes photographing Picasso on an exceptionally intimate and informal day-to-day basis. After an interim in New York in May when Harper and Company secured the right to publish the photos on a grand scale, he returned to Cannes. At the end of his letter dated 23 June 1957 and concerned mostly with unpublished early Picasso letters and drawings, he adds this paragraph which I quote verbatim:

> "Now, something of a different nature. During our many, many talks, especially during these days since I came back from New York, I've come to the firm conclusion that he's love nothing better than to visit the States. If he were invited by someone in our highest circles I feel that he's ready to come. He's fully aware of the residual McCarthyist elements that might make for some embarrassing moments, but I think he'd take his chances on facing such moments as they arose. Incidentally, at the political level, from people who should really know, I'm sure that he has very, very little to do with the French Party -- if at all. In fact, a visit to the States would, in every liklihood, bring some sort of statement from him that might make him break with them openly, for good. Anyway, simply as the artist who produced your great exhibition, I've been hoping that some of your Museum trustee-brass might smooth the way to have him invited, for this autumn. How about it? Saludos."

I may say that when I met Duncan at John Gunther's and saw several hundred of the wonderful Picasso photos I do not recall discussing at all the question of Picasso's coming to the U.S.A.

However, I think that Duncan may well be right about Picasso's attitude toward the Party. And even if he still has the same degree of rather idealistic loyalty he expressed in the July Atlantic, I think we might do a great deal to "corrupt" him if he could be invited. Even if he shouldn't come -- which is more than likely -- his being asked would make a great difference to him

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and even more to the artists and intellectuals throughout the world who are impressed by Russia's "thaw" but wonder whether we are going to respond. I think inviting Picasso would be a bold stroke in the cultural struggle between them and us in which thanks to various reasons we miss one chance after another. Perhaps he could be asked for the Chicago or Philadelphia opening of our show?

(Quite aside from the public aspects of the problem, I think such an invitation might well have a critical effect on the future of some of Picasso's best works still owned by him but for the time being in our possession. He has hinted as much.)

An invitation is of course a gamble. In spite of Duncan's impression, Picasso might very well not accept. He is 76 and has never been on a plane or a boat (except to Minorca sixty years ago). Inertia and his work might well prevent him. Yet, I'm sure he'd like to be asked -- and he is the greatest living artist and we are the Museum of Modern Art. What do you think?

Sincerely,

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Mr. Nelson A. Rockefeller
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York 20, New York

AHB:ma

P.S. I sent copies of a draft of this letter to Jim Soby and Rene on July 5th. Jim is all for asking Picasso, Rene has not yet replied but I'm sending it to you now anyway for consideration so that, if you will, we may discuss it in September.

Transcribed from Mr. Barr's longhand sent from Vermont. Not reread by Mr. Barr.

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Executive Registry
9-6157

ROOM 5600
30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA
NEW YORK 20, N. Y.

August 9, 1957

Dear Allen:

I apologize for bothering you again. However, any reactions to the attached that your shop would be willing to give me would be much appreciated and kept completely in confidence.

With many thanks and best wishes,

Sincerely,

Nelson A. Rockefeller

The Honorable
Allen W. Dulles
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington 25, D. C.

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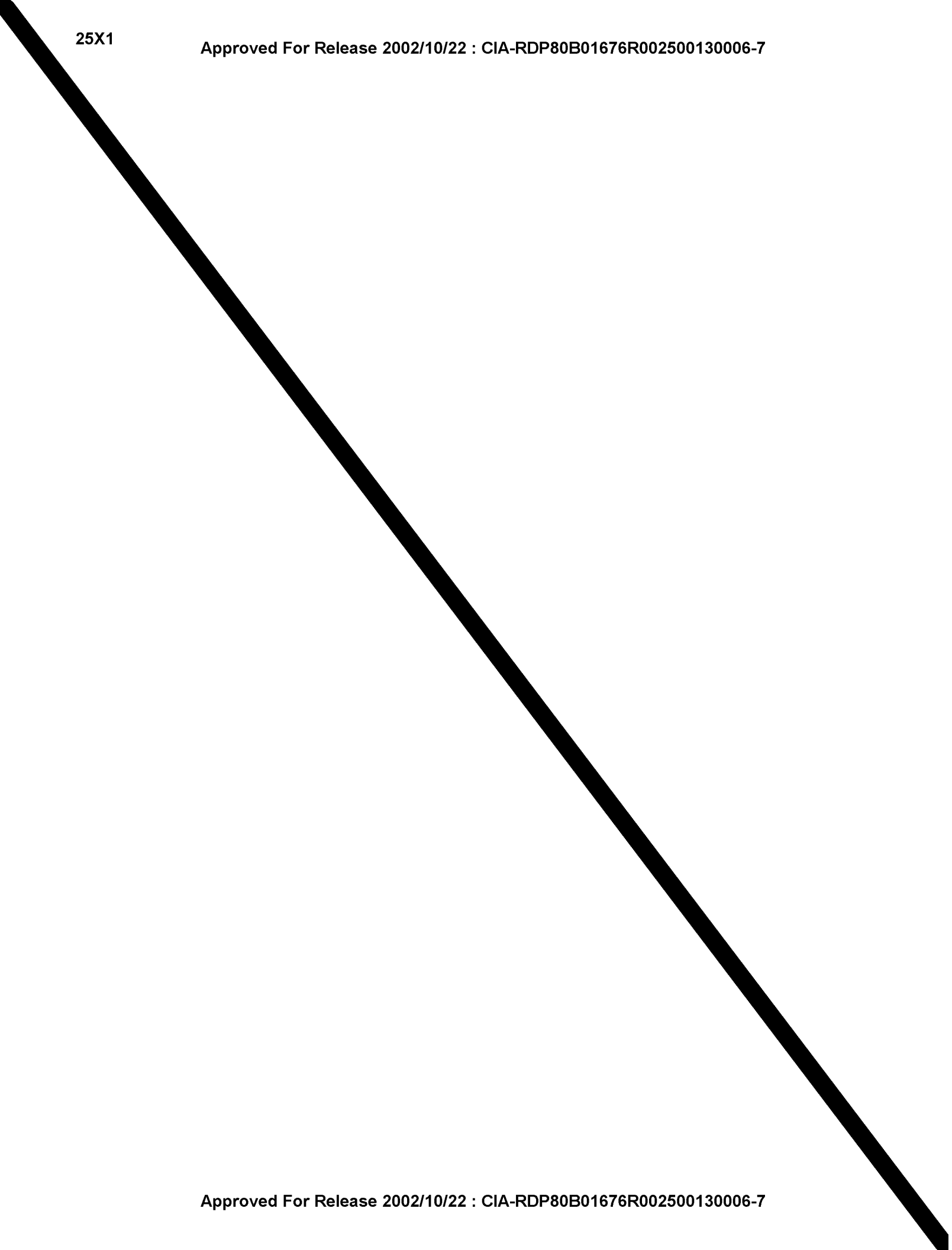

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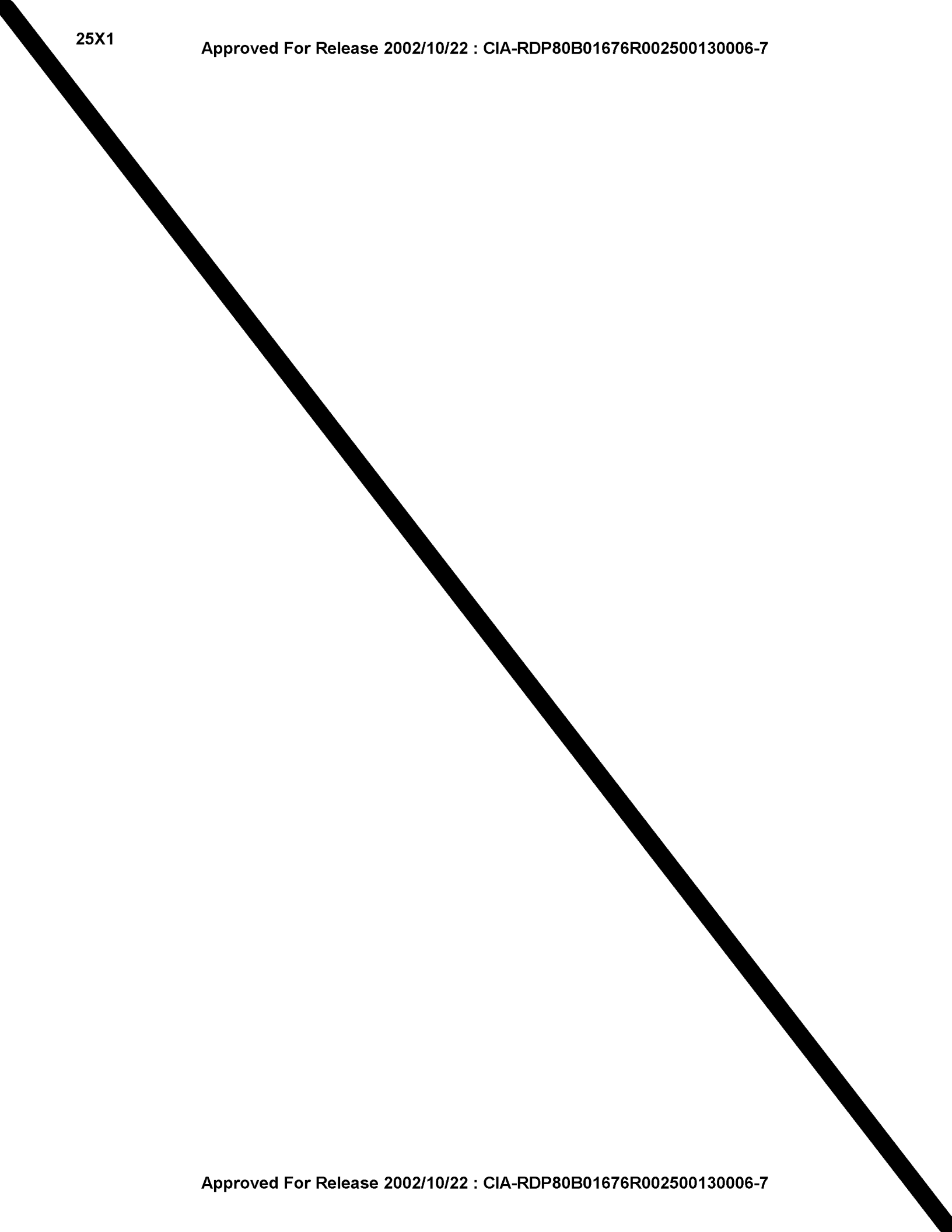

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Dulles

Mr. Smith has called [ ] STAT

and has arranged to come by his office.

JAS

5 July 57

(DATE)

FORM NO. 1 AUG 54 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101 WHICH MAY BE USED. (47)

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Dulles

Mr. Smith has called [redacted] STAT

and has arranged to come by his office.

JAS

July 57

(DATE)

250317

FORM NO. 101 REPLACES FORM 10-101 (47)
1 AUG 54 WHICH MAY BE USED.

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